

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1.-8. (Canceled)

9. (New) A developer container configured to be removably mounted to a body of an image forming apparatus, said developer container comprising:

a toner portion adapted to store toner; and

a mouth portion having a first wall connected to a toner outlet passage of said toner portion, said mouth portion having an outlet formed in a side wall thereof, said mouth portion having a valve for selectively opening and closing said outlet, said mouth portion having a second wall opposite to said first wall, wherein said second wall does not include an outlet for the toner.

10. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein said outlet in said side wall of said mouth portion faces in a substantially horizontal direction when said developer container is mounted to the body.

11. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 10, wherein said outlet in said side wall of said mouth portion is configured to receive a nozzle that extends in a substantially horizontal direction when said developer container is mounted to the body.

12. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 11, wherein said valve includes a shutter comprising a seal member formed of foam sponge and closing said outlet, said seal member being formed with a slit via which the nozzle is capable of penetrating into said developer container.

13. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 11, wherein said valve includes a shutter comprising:

a biasing member;

a shutter member constantly biased by said biasing member from an inside toward an outside of said developer container and movable between a closing position for closing a passage and an opening position for opening said passage; and

a seal member disposed in said passage and slidable on said shutter member held in the closing position;

wherein when said developer container is mounted to the body, the nozzle penetrates into said developer container in a substantially horizontal direction while moving said shutter member from the closing position to the opening position against an action of said biasing member.

14. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein said outlet in said side wall of said mouth portion faces a direction substantially perpendicular to said second wall.

15. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein said outlet in said side wall of said mouth portion faces a direction substantially perpendicular to said first wall.

16. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein said second wall is flat.

17. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein said shutter means comprises:

an external shutter positioned outside of said developer outlet and movable between a closing position for closing said developer outlet and an opening position for opening said developer outlet; and

a biasing member constantly biasing said external shutter toward the closing position;

wherein when said developer container is mounted to the body, said external shutter is moved from the closing position to the opening position against an action of said biasing member.

18. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein said developer container is mounted to or dismounted from the body in substantially a direction of gravity, said outlet being open in a substantially horizontal direction.

19. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 18, wherein a nozzle mounted on the body is inserted into or removed from said developer outlet in a substantially horizontal direction when said developer container is mounted to or dismounted from the body, respectively.

20. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein said toner portion contains toner.

21. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein mouth portion is configured to receive a nozzle through said outlet in said side wall of said mouth portion whereby the nozzle does not extend into said toner portion.

22. (New) An image forming apparatus comprising:  
a developer container removably mounted to said image forming apparatus and storing a toner;  
air feeding means for feeding air under pressure into said developer container; and  
a substantially hermetically sealed passage extending from said developer container to a position to which the toner should be replenished,  
wherein said developer container comprises:  
a toner portion adapted to store toner; and

a mouth portion having a first wall connected to a toner outlet passage of said toner portion, said mouth portion having an outlet formed in a side wall thereof, said mouth portion having a valve for selectively opening and closing said outlet, said mouth portion having a second wall opposite to said first wall, wherein said second wall does not include an outlet for the toner.

23. (New) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said toner portion contains toner.

24. (New) A developer container configured to be removably mounted to a body of an image forming apparatus, said developer container comprising:

means for storing toner; and

a mouth portion having a first wall connected to a toner outlet passage of said means for storing toner, said mouth portion having an outlet formed in a side wall thereof, said mouth portion having means for selectively opening and closing said outlet, said mouth portion having a second wall opposite to said first wall, wherein said second wall does not include an outlet for the toner.

25. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 24, wherein said outlet in said side wall of said mouth portion faces in a substantially horizontal direction when said developer container is mounted to the body.

26. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 25, wherein said outlet in said side wall of said mouth portion is configured to receive a nozzle that extends in a substantially horizontal direction when said developer container is mounted to the body.

27. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 26, wherein said means for selectively opening and closing said outlet includes a shutter comprising a seal member

formed of foam sponge and closing said outlet, said seal member being formed with a slit via which the nozzle is capable of penetrating into said developer container.

28. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 26, wherein said means for selectively opening and closing said outlet includes a shutter comprising:

a biasing member;

a shutter member constantly biased by said biasing member from an inside toward an outside of said developer container and movable between a closing position for closing a passage and an opening position for opening said passage; and

a seal member disposed in said passage and slidable on said shutter member held in the closing position;

wherein when said developer container is mounted to the body, the nozzle penetrates into said developer container in a substantially horizontal direction while moving said shutter member from the closing position to the opening position against an action of said biasing member.

29. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 24, wherein said outlet in said side wall of said mouth portion faces a direction substantially perpendicular to said second wall.

30. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 24, wherein said outlet in said side wall of said mouth portion faces a direction substantially perpendicular to said first wall.

31. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 24, wherein said second wall is flat.

32. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 24, wherein said shutter

means comprises:

an external shutter positioned outside of said developer outlet and movable between a closing position for closing said developer outlet and an opening position for opening said developer outlet; and

a biasing member constantly biasing said external shutter toward the closing position;

wherein when said developer container is mounted to the body, said external shutter is moved from the closing position to the opening position against an action of said biasing member.

33. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 24, wherein said developer container is mounted to or dismounted from the body in substantially a direction of gravity, said outlet being open in a substantially horizontal direction.

34. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 33, wherein a nozzle mounted on the body is inserted into or removed from said developer outlet in a substantially horizontal direction when said developer container is mounted to or dismounted from the body, respectively.

35. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 24, wherein said means for storing toner contains toner.

36. (New) The developer container as claimed in claim 24, wherein mouth portion is configured to receive a nozzle through said outlet in said side wall of said mouth portion whereby the nozzle does not extend into said means for storing toner.

37. (New) An image forming apparatus comprising:

a developer container removably mounted to said image forming apparatus and storing a toner;

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air feeding means for feeding air under pressure into said developer container; and  
a substantially hermetically sealed passage extending from said developer container to  
a position to which the toner should be replenished,

wherein said developer container comprises:

means for storing toner; and

a mouth portion having a first wall connected to a toner outlet passage of said means  
for storing toner, said mouth portion having an outlet formed in a side wall thereof, said  
mouth portion having means for selectively opening and closing said outlet, said mouth  
portion having a second wall opposite to said first wall, wherein said second wall does not  
include an outlet for the toner.

38. (New) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said means  
for storing toner contains toner.